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ABSTRACT

This profile of the English language teaching situation in Venezuela discusses the status of English in society and in the educational system. It also gives an account of Venezuelan political, economic, and social life. A description is given of the education system and reforms that have been proposed for nursery school through higher education. Recognition of English as the first foreign language to be studied is noted. From the little information available, the teaching cadre and training programs are described, and materials support, largely in the form of books, is discussed. Also discussed are (1) the educational administration policies with regard to the teaching of English, (2) national development and planning activities, (3) English outside the educational system, (4) British and U.S. support for the teaching of English, (5) other agency support, (6) commercial opportunities, (7) the status of creative writing in English, (8) the initial stages of research support, and (9)professional associations. A concluding statement notes that Venezuela's problems--in English language teaching as well as other areas--come less from economic than from communication factors. Sources of further information are noted. (AMH)

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THE BRITISH COUNCIL
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE DIVISION

ENGLISH TEACHING PROFILE (PROVISIONAL)

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Country: Venezuela **Date: November 1981**

INTRODUCTION

Venezuela, the fifth largest South American country, lies south of the Caribbean, between Colombia, Brazil and Guyana, with an unresolved border dispute with the last. It became an independent country in 1929 on the break-up of La Gran Colombia, the unwieldly republic created by Simon Bolivar after the wars for independence from Spain. Now one of the two surviving democracies in South America, Venezuela is governed by a presidential bi-cameral constitution and administered regionally in a Federal District and seven regions. The 1971 census recorded a population of 11.5 million; by 1971 the population was estimated at about 13.5 million, while the census of 1981 is predicted to reveal between 16-17 million.

Oil was first extracted at Maracaibo in 1915 and this was followed by steady prosperity. During the 1970s the country enjoyed an economic boom, due largely to the increased oil prices negotiated by OPEC, of which Venezuela is a founder-member. Annual growth rates were of the order of 5 - 7%, and in 1980 GNP was quoted as:

Bolivars (B) 210 billion (= US$ 48,923 million)

and the average per capita income as:

Bolivars (B) 15,555 (= US$ 3,624).

The physical infrastructure of some sectors of public life in some areas is correspondingly sophisticated. However, the oil glut at the end of the decade has slowed down economic growth, and now there is considerable anxiety about the future, with reduced levels of public expenditure and declining profitability for some of the huge investments; eg in steel and aluminium production.

President Luis Herrera Campins, a Christian Democrat, came to power in 1978 with a programme of 'communitarianism', promising social reform and the restructuring of national education. The 1976-80 Plan de la Nación (National Development Plan) proposed, amongst other measures policies of human resource development, and modernisation and democratisation of agriculture and industry, a new emphasis on quality and the introduction of new ideas and techniques in education.

Venezuela on the whole presents a picture of a fairly industrious but relaxed people, intent upon making use of their opportunities in quite a progressive way, relatively free from the feuds and tensions which charaterise other Latin American countries, but basically puzzled as to how best to move towards their objectives.

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1. Role and status of English

The national language is Spanish, usually in the form of a distinctive Venezuelan dialect. No indigenous languages have survived to any significant extent. English is widely used for international business and technological communications, while academics and professionals accept the need of English for keeping abreast of current publications and for participation in international gatherings. In view of the many cultural and economic links with the USA, it is not surprising that Venezuelan English usually has a North American flavour, and many of those with proficiency in the language prove to have spent significant periods in the USA.

English has a clear predominance over all other foreign languages in Venezuela: reference is occasionally made to French, Portuguese, Italian and Russian, but the number of people attempting to master these languages appears to be minimal.

Venezuelans on the whole do not seem to be brilliant linguists. While there is a 'cerebral' awareness of the importance of English in most institutions where languages are taught, there is little of the determination to become proficient that is seen in some European and Commonwealth countries, and learning generally is apt to be governed by the characteristic 'facilismo' (taking things easily). However, it is important to record that there is a proportion of Venezuelans with reasonable proficiency in English who are proud to have acquired it without going abroad, so that in the words of a current advertisement 'SI! En Venezuela se aprende bien el inglés'. (Yes, it is possible to learn English well in Venezuela.)

2. English within the Education System

Owing to an annual population growth rate of about 3.8% during recent years, the educational system is under heavy strain. According to the Sixth National Development Plan (1981-85), the total number of individuals within the system in the year 1978/80 was 4,[illegible],985. Of the population of 15 years of age or more, 1,300,000 were recorded as totally illiterate, and a further 3 million as functionally illiterate (not having passed beyond grade II). During the period 1981-5 it will be necessary to increase the number of places within the system by 28% to achieve the following targets:

for educación pre-escolar (nursery)	659,974
educaión básica (grades I-IX)	3,722,505
educación media (grades X-XI	297,618
educación superior (higher)	4[illegible]
educación para adultos (further)	47[illegible]

In considering the place of English at each of these levels, it may be remembered that provision is shared, in varying proportions, between public and private institutions, though private institutions must conform to official policy.

Educación pre-escolar (nursery education). This is mostly provided by private organisations and is confined to the principal cities. A few institutions offer bilingual education.

Educación básica (basic education). Venezuela has adopted an integrated scheme of nine years' basic education (cutting across traditional boundaries of 'primary' and 'secondary' - although the American terms 'elementary', 'junior' and 'high school' are still heard).

Basic education is divided into three ciclos (cycles):[1]

Years 1 - 4 Primer Ciclo - Instrumental

[1] 'Years' refers not to student age but to years within the system.

Years 5 - 7 Segundo Ciclo - Consolidación

Years 8 - 9 Tercero Ciclo - Independización

A detailed new curriculum is in process of formulation, inspired considerably by such educational leaders as Piaget, Freire, Bruner, etc. Significantly, emphasis is laid on the area of language, which is seen as the vital factor in individual development and in social awareness. Within that, the learning of a foreign language receives emphasis as an important step forward in development.

Objectives and methods for the area of language have already been set out in some detail and are fully abreast of developments in other leading countries. In the teaching of the foreign language, there is a retreat from the earlier structure - drill methods of the 1950s and 1960s - and great enthusiasm to embrace the 'communicative approach' to language-learning associated with various British and European authorities. The outline plan provides for a total of 1980 hours of instruction in the mother tongue; but teaching of the foreign language is not introduced until the eighth and ninth years, when the total hours allotted amount to 450!

Although the areas of foreign language would eventually include French, Portuguese, Italian and Russian, in practice the overiding assumption is that for some time to come the foreign language will be in English.

It is difficult to discover full details of the process by which this impressive curriculum reform will be carried out. During the year 1981/82, it is claimed that trial teaching of the new programme in English is being carried out in twenty selected schools in different parts of the country. It is admitted that so far almost no suitable materials are available and that the reform implies extensive programmes of in-service training.

Educación media - Diersificada y Profesional (middle education, diversified and professional). This consists of a further cycle of 2/3 years, geared to vocational and professional objectives, whether academic, technical commercial, agricultural, etc. Detailed programmes for this cycle have not yet been widely distributed, but it seems likely that in most courses 3/4 hours weekly will be prescribed for English related to specific purposes.

Educación superior (higher education). This covers a further period of 3-5 years, and is provided at a variety of institutions, eg the older, autonomous universidades (universities); or newer Ministry-controlled colegios universitarios (university colleges); institutos universitarios tecnicos, IUT (university technical institutes); institutos universitarios politecnicos experimentales IUPE (experimental university polytechnic institutions); institutos universitarios pedagógicos, IUP (teacher training university institutes). Apart from students specialising in modern languages almost all students are required to take two more semesters (half-years) of English. Such

courses usually contain a. a remedial or b. an 'instrumental' (ESP) component. Staff teaching these courses usually have time to plan their teaching, select materials etc, but mostly express the need for expert advice and consultation.

Educación para Adultos (further education). In practice the greater part of this is provided by the Instituto Nacional de Cooperación Educativa, INCE. This huge, well-funded, semi-official organisation provides a vast range of vocational training schemes in close collaboration with industries. Many of these involve an element of English, though INCE maintains its own extensive staff of instructors. Courses of training for the hotel and tourist industry include a strong element of English. INCE is also negotiating training schemes for nationals of various Caribbean countries in which it is expected that English will be the language of instruction.

Some large industries (eg Sidecurgica del Orinoco, SIDOR) maintain their own education and training schemes, in which English is present at all levels from tradesmen to management.

Cuarto nivel (fourth or postgraduate level). Of all students enrolled in higher education in Venezuela, one per cent are engaged on postgraduate programmes; but this is at present a poorly coordinated field, and detailed data are not available. Presumably postgraduate students in many areas have a significant need for English, translations of articles, etc.

Conclusion In general, most teachers of English at all these levels profess to be disappointed at the poor levels of proficiency achieved by their students. Most are ready to attribute failure to working conditions (large classes, inadequate facilities, lack of support, etc), but there seems scope for more accurate evaluation of the system to compare the effect of all relevant variables.

3. **Teachers of English**

The teaching force Details of the composition of this are not available. Most of the teaching of English is in the hands of Venezuelan teachers, for native-speakers, being foreigners, are not eligible for employment in public institutions. A small proportion of expatriates (American, British and various others), married to Veneuzelans, do of course work within the system. Officials have claimed that there is no shortage of trained teachers of English. However, the Sixth National Plan (1981-95) reports the following percentage of unqualified teachers at the present time:

In Grades 1 - 6 ... ... 18.5%

In Grades 7 - 9 ... ... 48%

and it is probable that the proportion of trained to untrained teachers varies between more and less privileged areas and institutions. The best teachers are obviously attracted to higher-level institutions, where conditions of work are more rewarding and less frustrating.

Initial training There are two principal titulos (qualifications) for graduate teachers of English:

> Licenciado (a) en Lenguas Modernas. This title is awarded by the Universidad Central de Venezuela (UCV) Escuela de Lenguas Modernas (School of Modern Languages), which has been in operation for about six years, and the Universidad Metropolitana (established 1965). The ten-semester programmes, which require study of two languages, provide qualification as translators and interpreters.

Profesor(a) de Idiomas: Inglés. This title is awarded by the four Institutos Universitarios Pedagógicos at Caracas, Maracay, Barquisimeto, and Mauria after eight or nine semesters. The 'Pedagógico' at Caracas is the oldest and most highly regarded of these.

The Caracas Pedagógico produces up to sixty trained teachers a year, but the other instutitions considerably fewer. It is uncertain whether there is a manpower policy to ensure the recruitment and training of the number of teachers which the system requires.

Training Programmes These typically include courses on: language proficiency; linguistics (phonetics, phonology, morpho-syntaxis, semantics, socio-linguistics, and psycholinguistics); literature ('stylistics' and sometimes semiology) and culture; methodology and practical teaching. Venezuelan teachers of English observed at work seem on the whole to have a reasonable command of the language and a good idea of traditional methodology. Disappointing results achieved must be attributed largely to factors outside the immediate control of teachers.

Post-experience training The majority of teachers once released into the system are apt to feel abandoned. There is rarely any follow-up from the institution which has trained them. A small proportion, with special initiative or resources, manage to get abroad for further exposure to the language and to the professional issues involved in teaching it. In general opportunities for in-service training in the country, or further studies abroad, are scarce. Unfortunately, the substantial Fundayacucho scholarship programme to promote national development has not so far regarded English as a key developmental area.

4. Materials support

Books are seen to be the principal support material required in any teaching programme; the present government has inaugurated a scheme for the free provision of textbooks in certain areas of educación básica, but this does not include foreign languages. In the past, the Ministry of Education has officially approved for use in Venezuelan schools only books written by Venezuelan authors, and a number of English courses have been duly authorised, eg: My First English Book, etc; English for You; and Study English. In the absence of any books specifically designed for the new curriculum, teachers are exhorted to use their initiative: quite a few are using the American New Horizons and Intercom series and the British Strategies and Kernel Lessons series. The Longman Group Ltd maintains a representative in Caracas, and about eight other British publishers of ELT materials have given exclusive rights to the enterprising Libreria Helpful (President: Victor Roy).

Language laboratories are quite common, especially in the richer institutions, but there is not much evidence that they contribute effectively to the language learning process, and many are out of order.

Other aids The new programmes for educación básica exhort teachers to build up collections of recursos materiales (physical resources) - though it is not clear whether financial resources are available to help in the acquisition and storage of these. Although produced in 1973, the special study by Argenis Garces, of the University of Zulia, on 'La Ensenanza de Lenguas Modernas en Venezuela' (the teaching of foreign languages in Venezuela) suggests that there is some way to go before teachers of modern languages make full use of standard teaching aids.

5. Educational administration in relation to English teaching

The Ministry of Education is responsible for general policy, planning, curriculum initiatives and financial control; routine control devolves upon regional administrations. Little evidence is available on the extent, or effectiveness, of teacher and school supervision and inspection. There are said to be supervisores, but their responsibilities are not clear, and few teachers are aware of any control or help coming from within the education hierarchies.

Criteria Venezuela in common with other Latin American countries has no national examination system (such as GCE, CSE, etc). Evaluation of pupils' progress, and decisions about promotion etc, depend on local criteria. Programmes in English for the new curriculum indicate a move towards the definition of learning targets, but this needs a good deal more study, explanation and experiment.

Programmes in Ingles Instrumental in Ministry institutions There is a strong need, and demand, for coordination of ESP programmes in the various technical institutions under Ministry control, but no adequate machinery has yet been established.

6. Development and planning of the teaching of English

General English departments of some institutions at all levels give the impression of being seriously concerned with what they are attempting in relation both to such policy directives as they can discover and to their own perception of students' needs. In other cases, teachers have settled for a comfortable routine, not making excessive demands on themselves or on their students, aware that they are not achieving much, but capable no doubt of being reanimated when the system gives a clearer lead and encouragement.

Ministry of Education Responsibility for curriculum development lies with the División de Currículo (Curriculum Division) of the Oficina Sectorial de Planificación Presupuesto (Sectoral Office) for Planning and the Budget. During 1981 the Division has been working hard on a project for the trial teaching of new programmes for the eighth grade of Educación Básica during the school year 1981-82. These programmes are each under the direction of a coordinator (for EFL: Profesora Giseira Hernandez) who has worked energetically and drawn on advice from planners, teachers, specialists and teacher trainers in nearby universities (in Caracas only). The programmes are taught experimentally in at least twenty schools in different parts of the country. It is not known what machinery exists for the support and monitoring of the trial teaching nor what degree of modificiation will be accepted at the end of the trial period. Meanwhile, activity in the Division centres on the preparaton of programmes for the ninth grade in 1982-83.

Initiatives Some conversations took place in October 1981 between the Director of Educación Superior, the Curriculum Division, the Office of Planning, the Department of Foreign Relations and representatives of the British Council, which led to proposals for setting up training courses related to current ELT programmes both in educación básica, and in technical English. The outcome of these proposals should be studied with interest.

The National Budget With reference to activities referred to above, it is of interest to note that the education budget for 1982 is at a standstill in most areas. In the area of 'Planificación de la Educación' (Education Planning) there is, however, a proposed increase from Bs 25 million (1981) to Bs 185 million (1982).

Other bodies that should be interested in projects for the planning and improvement of English teaching include:

a. CORDIPLAN (The Central Office of Co-ordination and Planning);

b. FUNDAYACHUCHO - the scholarship foundation for promoting national development.

c. OFICINA MINISTERIAL DE ASUNTOS INTERNACIONALES of the Ministry of Education, which is managing the 'Programa de Caribe' (Caribbean programme).

7. English outside the education system

Environmental The Venezuelan linguistic environment is strongly Spanish, and English appears only in a subdued and minor role. Nevertheless, there are distinctive 'inputs' of the English language for any who care to seek them out. Caracas supports a sizeable English medium newspaper, The Daily Journal, which is not too aggressively focussed on North American interests; many films in the numerous cinemas are run with Spanish subtitles imposed on original 'English' dialogue (not dubbed); broadcasts of BBC language programmes occur quite frequently; of the 459 Librerias (bookshops) listed in the Caracas yellow-page directory only a small number hold stocks of books in English, but in the magazine shelves of most bookshops and supermarkets between a quarter and a third of the magazines are usually in English (especially on hobbies, such as photography, aeronautics, diving, etc). There is meagre evidence of English loan-words adopted into Venezuelan Spanish, and few English or American vogue-words.

Institutional Private language-teaching institutions and programmes are widely advertised in all Venezuelan cities, indicating the general readiness of (especially young) Venezuelans to undertake further studies of English as well as their recognition that official teaching programmes have not taken them far enough. A strong clientele is provided by the post-secondary school-leavers who have time to spare before taking up places in higher education. Some of the English courses offered are outside the country, eg in Britain (with British Caledonian), USA (with the American Language Academy twenty-three branches) and the Caribbean. Many others are local, and each institution offers some special appeal (eg 'electronic') to secure its share of the market.

It is difficult to generalise about the private language-teaching institutions, which vary in quality, though many of them survive for many years, indicating that they satisfy customers' expectations. Two key factors to observe in evaluation are: capacity and qualifications of the teachers; and class size.

These institutions are not linked with any kind of association, though they must comply with certain official requirements. The British Council in Caracas maintains a list, but this implies no official recognition. Relations are usually friendly, since teachers in private language schools are sometimes professionals from more regular institutions.

8. British support for the teaching of English

Individuals A small number, who identify strongly with Venezuela, contribute significantly to the maintenance of standards in the teaching of English and the training of teachers. Some are in the country on direct contract and local salaries; some are linked to Venezuela by marriage.

Publishers Most British publishers with ELT lists are represented in Venezuela, and Sales Managers etc visit the country regularly (see also 11).

The British Council

Main office In the Caracas Office, Representative is ELO, no other London-appointed staff have expertise in ELT, and at present there is no ELO. Locally engaged staff deal with enquiries on books and examinations, courses and education.

Specialist tourists Lectures for overseas courses.
Full use is made of opportunities for bringing in experts with relevant experience, and a number of leading authorities have conducted seminars and courses in recent years.

British Council institutes have recently been established in the important provincial cities of Maracaibo and Ciudad Guayana, each under a Director or Acting Director, with a staff of native-speaking British graduates (with ELT training in most cases from International House, London). Courses taught at the Institutes are geared to British teaching materials and take students through three levels towards the Cambridge First and Proficiency Examinations.

A British Council Institute in Caracas Until recently there was an influential Instituto Cultural Británico Venezolano (basically a local institution run by a local board of governors) in Caracas. This Institute having become defunct, the way now appears open for the establishment of a British Council Institute which would be able to coordinate the regional institutes and serve as a general resource centre.

The British Community An influential social and business community strongly supports the British Council and is eager to see the establishment of an Institute in Caracas. There is a proposal to establish a British Centre in Caracas, in which the British Council would occupy a key position amongst other British organisations, such as British Caledonian, the British Tourist Authority, the British Chamber of Commerce etc, as well as a British Bookshop.

British Universities regularly accept Venezuelan teachers and professionals for further training and research. Since 1980 there has been a marked decrease in officially sponsored students at British universities. In the large FUNDAYACHUCHO Programme, the British share of the postgraduate scholars was 15%; current numbers have dropped to ninety, which, though still considerable, should be compared to eight hundred in Canada, three thousand in the United States and five hundred in France: all beneficiaries of the deliberate cutback by Venezuela consequent on the UK raising fees for foreign students. Nevertheless, there is a very high regard for British education, and the UK is preferred by many wishing to specialise in ELT. (A leading Venezuelan ELT contract - Adriana Bolivár - is at present pursuing a PhD at Birmingham. The Council in Venezuela is embarked on a long-term policy of raising the prestige of English Studies, largely through exchange).

Teacher exchange Plans exist for the exchange of British teachers (of Spanish) and Venezuelan teachers (of English), through the Central Bureau for Educational Visits and Exchanges; but implementation has been delayed by various formalities. Venezuelan teachers of English are keenly interested in this scheme.

9. **American support for the teaching of English**

Individual As in the case of British settlers (see 8), a significant number of Americans are located in a variety of Venezuelan institutions. There is a special concentration of expertise, especially in ESP, at the Simon Bolivár University on the outskirts of Caracas.

Institutional There are two bi-national centres, Centro Venezolano Americano de Zulia, CEVAZ, in Maracaibo, and Centro Venezolano Americano, CVA, in Caracas - the former a grade A establishment, with an American appointed Director, the latter, grade B with a local Director. Both centres are governed by local boards of management, but they have received significant donations of books, cultural materials and visiting speakers from the USA. The principal function of both centres is to provide instruction in English. This is done to a well-tried formula of ten unit courses, each of one month, covering in all about the same area of official secondary education and followed by several advanced conversation courses. The centres also conduct the American TOEFL examinations. It is claimed that over a thousand students pass through each of the centres yearly; this requires a sizeable teaching force, and the centres conduct their own staff training schemes. Unit courses are based on the Intercom series. In many ways these Centres are model institutions in that the English language is taught in an ample cultural and topical context.

Advanced Training A significant number of Venezuelan ELT authorities have received advanced training in the USA, but no figures are available. The American Fulbright Commission continues to arrange exchanges, as well as scholarships for advanced study.

10. **Other agency support**

Canada, Australia, Ireland, India, Holland and others Although no official schemes of collaboration for ELT exist with governments of these countries, individuals in Venezuela contribute usefully to ELT.

The Caribbean Already a number of experienced teachers with an excellent command of English are employed in a number of institutions, especially in coastal areas. It is possible that under the 'Programa del Caribe' the exchange of language teachers may become part of official programmes of collaboration.

11. **Commercial opportunities**

Books and teaching aids There is a strong potential market here. Venezuelan teachers are well aware of the range and practical focus of British TEFL books and journals. The problem of meeting the demand efficiently, is formidable in the face of challenges from the USA, which can at present respond to many needs quite quickly. A valuable contact is Mr Victor Roy, of Helpful Books (Apartado 51.728, Sabana Grande, Caracas 1050, Texex 21,795), who represents at least nine British publishers as well as some American; has branches in six provincial cities; and is an indefatigable source of information.

ELT journals At present there seems to be no regular channel for the supply of ELT journals to Venezuelan teachers. Possibly this is a service which the British Council will undertake.

Official level There is a complete dearth of teaching materials related to the new basic education syllabus. There would be an opportunity for a British publisher, or publishers, to offer to collaborate with the Ministry of Education in developing suitable materials.

A British Bookshop The proposal for a British Centre in Caracas includes the establishment of a British bookshop. If such factors as capitalisation, experience and local contacts are adequate, this could contribute towards the British ELT effort in Venezuela.

Hardware In Venezuela there is considerable purchasing power. Venezuelans are interested in electronic equipment, and the country is dedicated to the search for new and better methods of learning. There is a potential market for the latest language-learning technology, but many language laboratories now stand idle in institutions all over the country for want of maintenance, repair or operating skill. The supply of equipment needs to be associated with training facilities and guarantees of service.

12. **Creative writing**

The language situation does not incline Venezuelan writers to adopt English as their medium of expression.

Within the educational context, there is considerable emphasis on creativity as an aspect of 'human resource development', and there is certainly scope for harnessing creative activities to ELT within the educational system.

13. **Current research**

General There is general recognition that Venezuela has not yet fully grasped the opportunities and necessities of postgraduate education and research - for example, it is commented that the Sixth National Development Plan (1981-85) makes no mention of this. The Ayacucho scholarship programme also implies that higher education and research has to be obtained abroad.

Universities Several Departments of Foreign Languages are thinking about the inauguration of postgraduate programmes; but only one so far with a formulated programme for Maestria en Linguistica (MA in Linguistics) - the Universidad de Zulia, Maracaibo. The programme contains three menciones (options): Theoretical Linguistics, Linguistics applied to the analysis of teaching of Spanish; and Linguistics applied to the analysis and Teaching of English (Co-ordinator, Professor Godsuno Chela Flores).

Official The Ministry's Section for Planificacion and Presupuesto (Planning and Budget) obviously implies a research and evaluation potential, but not much has so far been published.

Professional associations The situation is best described as fluid. In 1973 there was an entnusiastic start to the Asociación de Profesores de Lenguas Extranjeras de Venezuela (APLEV) - the Venezuelan Association of Teachers of Foreign Language, but it is not clear whether this still survives in any form. More recently a number of ad hoc conferences have taken place at the initiative of particular institutions eg 24-25 May 1981, a National Convention on Ingles en la Transferencia de Tecnologia (English in the transference of technology); in May 1981 another conference for Venezuelan Teachers of English; both of these convened by the Instituto Universitario Pedagogico Experimental de Barquisimeto (IUPEB). In June 1981 there was a National Convention of Linguists, at IUPE Maracay (IUPEMAR).

Journals and publications Not very much local effort, though some of it is of a good professional standard, achieves publication within Venezuela. Papers from the Conventions above have been deposited with the British Council in Caracas, but only through the kindness of a particular individual. The Universidad del Zulia Department of Modern Languages published Lingua No 1 in March 1980, but so far as it known there has been no sequel.

Problems Difficulties of setting up professional organisations in Venezuela are probably due to a combination of the following factors: complex procedures involved in formalising professional associations; undeveloped communication, especially postal facilities; financial problems; and local and regional rivalries. In the background always is a history of delicate relations between Government and universities.

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15. **General statement**

In ELT matters, as in others, Venezuela represents the type of Third World countries, whose problems come less from economic and financial factors than from deficiencies of communication, coordination and the harnessing of resources. The people and their system of government could be described as patiently and quietly persevering. They deserve success, and will no doubt eventually achieve it.

The ELT consultant who visited a considerable number of institutions in 1981 was struck by two remarks which frequently recurred. 'Please, don't forget about us', and 'We do need your help'.

H L B Moody
ELT Consultant